The Story of Yunus (AS): Tribulation in the Belly of the Fish

Islamic Stories - Volume 34

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Chapter 1: The Ordeal of Yunus (AS)

Divine Decree: The Command to the Fish

Bazzar narrated, with an authentic chain of transmission, from Abu Hurairah (RA), who said:

He heard the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) say that when Allah Almighty intended to confine Yunus (AS) in the belly of the fish,

He commanded the fish neither to consume his flesh nor to break his bones.

Accordingly, the fish swallowed Yunus (AS) and proceeded towards its dwelling deep within the ocean.

Voices in the Deep: The Sounds of the Sea

When the fish reached the depths of the ocean, Yunus (AS) heard a peculiar sound.

He pondered within himself what it could be.

Then, a divine message was conveyed to him while he was inside the belly of the fish:

Allah:

“This is the glorification of the creatures of the sea.”

Upon hearing this, Yunus (AS) began to proclaim the sanctity and glory of Allah from within the belly of the fish.

The Angels Hear: A Familiar Voice

The angels heard the glorification of Yunus (AS) and inquired:

Angels:

“O Lord! We are hearing a very faint voice from a distant land. What is it?”

Allah:

“That is My servant Yunus. I have confined him in the belly of the fish beneath the sea.”

Angels:

“He is a righteous servant. His righteous deeds used to rise to You daily.”

Allah:

“Indeed.”

Moved by his righteousness, the angels immediately interceded on his behalf.

Allah then commanded the fish, and it cast Yunus (AS) upon the shore.

On the Shore: A Body Afflicted

As affirmed by Divine Revelation:

“We cast him forth on the bare shore while he was ill.”

It is narrated that the fish carried Yunus (AS) across the sea and eventually deposited him near Mosul, at a place called Nusaybin.

Allah placed him in an ‘arā’—a dry, barren plain devoid of vegetation or mountains.

His body was in a state akin to an infant whose flesh has formed, but whose limbs remain undeveloped.

Nevertheless, none of his limbs had been harmed.

A Shelter Provided: Gourd and Goat

Allah caused a gourd vine to grow over him, providing shade and healing.

A mountain goat was sent to him, supplying milk morning and evening.

Some accounts suggest that the gourd itself provided nourishment—offering a variety of delectable foods.

The Wisdom in the Vine: Repelling Harm

The vine served not only as shade but also as protection, for its leaves repelled flies.

It is said that the extract of these leaves, when sprinkled, would prevent flies from settling in that place.

Thus, Yunus (AS) remained beneath the vine until his full recovery, as the leaves were highly beneficial for a body whose skin had peeled to expose flesh.

The Withering of the Vine: A Test of Grief

One day, while Yunus (AS) lay asleep, Allah caused the vine to wither.

According to some narrations, termites were sent to sever its roots.

Upon awakening, Yunus (AS) felt the sun’s intense heat.

Unable to bear it, he became distressed and sorrowful.

Allah:

“O Yunus! You grieve over the withering of a vine, yet you did not grieve over the countless lives you once awaited to perish.

They repented, and their repentance was accepted.”